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Classification Cancelled

Aaron E. Katz

or changed to

WORK AREAS TO BE CONSIDERED

AUTHORITY

UNCLASSIFIED

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FILE

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NRO Review Completed.

In partial response to your inquiry of June 8, 1959, here goes. As a general prelude to any discussions about this list or any similar list of proposed projects I must add that I have almost but not quite given up on trying to hire suitable people here. The blow with the loss of Philbrick was severe and it is difficult for me to imagine where to find substitutes, alternates or choices whom I would rank nearly as high. As I noted to you on Monday it is quite likely that with sufficient education and reorientation we have a tremendous stockpile of helpers for any of the projects I note below right here at RAND. I would be happy to go into this in more detail.

The following projects are not necessarily listed in order of priority but only in whatever order I happen to be writing them down on a scrap of paper as I dictate this memo. The first project has to do with space, ANPA, ANOC, and satellites. It is my firm conviction upon reading for the first time what I just finished writing--P-1707--that this furnishes an excellent basis for an expanded work in recce satellites and their multitudinous off-spring for various purposes. All we have to do is work on those things which I claim in that paper can be done, and we've got work a-plenty for a long time: from weather satellites, 24-hour satellites, civil applications, etc., etc.

A long-time favorite subject of mine (and Mart's as well) has to do with technical intelligence. For numerous reasons which I cannot expand upon in this particular memo, we are convinced and have been so convinced for a long time, that much money can be made in this field. Simple advances, techniques leading to novel collection and analysis techniques can be within our grasp, and perhaps sometime during the next year I'm going to simply knock off a couple of months and do this job once and for all. This will require some experiments, some demonstration and alas, I fear, much salesmanship. These proposed techniques would have to do with the role of simple cameras in the hands of tourists, official and unofficial, methods of analysis and use of photography secured for technical intelligence purposes and related matters. This leads directly to the next subject.

This subject is intelligence requirements, in which we are noting now a quick change. We are witnessing on the one hand with the imminence of a surveillance capability, that is a capability for cyclic coverage, the same stirrings of thought and introspection in the Air Force as for the full significance of such a capability. Lo and behold nobody really understands what it can do, how it should be used, what problems are tractable thereby, or anything else about it. There is a strong requirement for someone to do something rational, systematic, and thorough about intelligence requirements altogether. What do we really need anyway and for what purpose?

GROUP-4

Downgraded at 3 year intervals;  
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SECRET

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~~SECRET~~

To: John L. Hall

40-22  
4-200

The next subject might be called a collection of scientific problems relating to reconnaissance having to do with things like hypersonic visibility, illumination effects on film, methods of evaluating reconnaissance system performance, studies relating to the use of multi-sensor systems, and the like. This ought to be done--unfortunately cannot be done either leisurely or half-heartedly.

We occasionally pay lip service to the notion of limited war around here, and within that subject to the general notion of reconnaissance for limited wars. As far as I can make out this subject is a large vacuum in the United States, despite the efforts of Project Michigan and other projects to contribute to it. We could make mileage in studies of limited war reconnaissance which has heretofore been known as tactical reconnaissance. Namely, how to do it, preferred instrumentalities, ways of organizing to get it done, methods of handling data, study of timeliness requirements, etc., etc.

In order to immerse 117-L and similar projects in their proper context, it should be necessary to invent, discover or find a theory of value for pre-hostilities intelligence altogether, against which various and expensive reconnaissance proposals could be placed and tested for sense and rationality. One of the obvious difficulties of course, with intelligence, is that its use is never immediate, or at least hardly ever immediate. As a consequence it is very difficult to show what intelligence picked up today means in terms of dollars that are likely to be spent or saved several years later. We have certain ideas on how to go about formulating this general theory of value for intelligence and it would be worthwhile to have a crack at it.

The project variously known as Sentry, Big Brother, Big Boondoggle, etc. will be with us for a long time. We here at RAND have a historical connection with its origins and a continuing tradition of being connected with the project at almost all levels. We cannot afford either organizationally or personally, for those of us so involved, to drop this connection because we feel (as indicated in the memo I sent you several weeks ago -- M-3008) we continue to influence it and have some effect on its colossus. Without elaborating at length, a pursuit of the several ideas found in M-3008 are indicated and should prove fruitful.

Some of us still remember Duckworth and the abortive project that never really got going. We had some useful ideas at the time. These could be expanded either via a reconnect with Duckworth or independently of him.

Disarmament/inspection studies are going to start at RAND shortly I firmly believe. The State Department contract, their interest in this subject, and further, our interest independent of their interest or dollars, warrants preparation for the next conference on surprise attack and for inputs to the State Department and the Defense Department on general subjects for which inspection is of interest. I feel this ought to be one of our more important projects, being the kind of project that cannot well be done in industry at all, because of the cross inputs required.

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To: John L. Bult

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6-9-59  
R-3400

Next comes a grab-bag of ideas, projects and so on which we spit out occasionally like an orange seed. These are in the realm of off-beat ideas. You may have read some of the things we've written in this connection -- we intend to keep up the off-beat stuff.

That's about all I can think of this evening so I'll sign off here.

Aaron H. Katz  
Electronics Department

AKK:dk

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